



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF HEALTH CARE ACCESS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

CRISTINE A. VOGEL
COMMISSIONER

May 25, 2006

Chad Wable
Vice President, Marketing and Business Development
Saint Mary's Hospital
56 Franklin Street
Waterbury, CT 06706

Re: Certificate of Need Determination Request; Report Number: 06-30698-DTR
Saint Mary's Hospital, Inc.
Transfer of The Birthplace Services to Saint Mary's Hospital's Women and Infant Center

Dear Mr. Wable:

On May 3, 2006, the Office of Health Care Access ("OHCA") received your completed Certificate of Need ("CON") Determination request on behalf of Saint Mary's Hospital, Inc. regarding the transfer of The Birthplace ("Birthplace") services to Saint Mary's Hospital's ("SMH") Women and Infant Center ("WIC"). Upon review of the information contained in the request, OHCA makes the following findings:

1. On July 2, 1998, under CON Docket No.: 97-592, OHCA authorized SMH to establish and operate a freestanding Childbirth Center to be located at the Quality Inn, at 88 Union Street in Waterbury, Connecticut.
2. On July 8, 1999, under Docket No.: 99-540R, OHCA authorized a modification to CON authorization under Docket No.: 97-592 to change the location of the freestanding Childbirth Center from the Quality Inn, at 88 Union Street in Waterbury, Connecticut to SMH's campus at 56 Franklin Street, Waterbury, Connecticut.

3. On January 4, 2000, under Docket No.: 99-562R, OHCA authorized a subsequent modification to CON authorization under Docket No.: 97-592 to change ownership structure of The Birthplace (Childbirth Center) from St. Mary's Hospital Corporation and Community Birthing Center, Inc. to St. Mary's Hospital Corporation.
4. The Birthplace has operated as a department of SMH per Docket Number 99-562R.
5. The Birthplace currently offers the following:
 - Two dedicated suites including a family room and a kitchenette;
 - A certified nurse-midwife;
 - A board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist;
 - Labor, birth and postpartum care are provided by certified-midwives and registered nurses; and
 - A whirlpool tub is available for comfort during labor and/or to accommodate families desiring a water birth.
6. SMH proposes to transfer the Birthplace services to SMH's WIC, a 23-bed OB/GYN unit which includes a 9-bed neonatology unit. All services currently provided at the Birthplace will continue under the management of WIC, a department of SMH, in the same location at SMH.
7. SMH states that the services currently available to the patients at SMH will not change with the proposal. The existing two rooms within the Birthplace will be incorporated under the management of WIC, thereby, increasing the unit capacity to 25 beds. These two suites will remain in place and continue their existing function.
8. SMH states that it is committed to providing the birthing options offered by the Birthplace. Woman with low-risk pregnancies wishing to experience childbirth in a home-like atmosphere under the guidance and support of a certified nurse midwife can continue to receive that level of care within WIC in one of the two suites.
9. SMH will continue to follow the standards and policies previously established for the Birthplace.
10. SMH will not be renewing the Birthplace's existing accreditation. The operation of the Birthplace as a separate department contributed to staffing inefficiencies as staffing and other expenses were segregated from the rest of the labor and delivery unit at SMH.
11. This proposal will allow SMH the flexibility to make operational changes resulting in improved efficiency and provision of a broader use of the Birthplace services, such as post partum stays beyond twelve hours.
12. While SMH is not planning to continue the Birthplace as a separate and accredited department of the hospital, all of the benefits offered by the Birthplace will continue to be available to patients and their families.

13. The proposal will not result in any change to the following elements:

- The scope/type of services provided;
- The current population served; or
- The location of the existing service sites.

Based on the above findings, OHCA has determined that the proposed transfer of The Birthplace services to Saint Mary's Hospital's Women and Infant Center will not result in a change to the delivery of health care services provided within the Saint Mary's Hospital, Inc. There is no capital expenditure associated with the proposal. Therefore, a CON is not required pursuant to Sections 19a-638 and 19a-639 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Thank you for providing information to OHCA regarding this proposal. If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Steven W. Lazarus, Associate Health Care Analyst. He may be reached at (860) 418-7012.

Sincerely,

Signed by Cristine A. Vogel
Commissioner

CAV:swl